

**REPORT**

**Lincoln Highway Commission**

**TO**

**Governor Samuel M. Ralston**

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY**

**JAN 17 1917**

**DECEMBER 15, 1916**

---



REPORT OF

Lincoln Highway Commission

TO  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY

JAN 17 1917  
GOVERNOR SAMUEL M. RALSTON  
DECEMBER 15, 1916

COMMISSION APPOINTED TO DETERMINE THE ROUTE TRAVELED  
THROUGH INDIANA BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS  
FATHER'S FAMILY WHEN THEY REMOVED  
TO ILLINOIS IN 1830

---

OFFICERS OF THE COMMISSION

JOSEPH M. CRAVENS, CHAIRMAN, MADISON  
JESSE W. WEIK, SECRETARY, GREENCASTLE



Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 15, 1916.

Hon. Samuel M. Ralston,  
Governor of Indiana.

SIR:

The undersigned having been directed by you to "determine the route through Indiana traveled by Abraham Lincoln and his father's family when they emigrated to Illinois in 1830," beg leave to submit herewith the following report:

The first definite step in the movement to trace the proposed route between Mr. Lincoln's birth place in Kentucky and his home in Illinois was the following resolution adopted by the legislature of Kentucky in the year 1910:

"The name of the public road leading from Louisville, Kentucky, to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, known as the Louisville and Nashville pike, and from Elizabethtown, Kentucky, through Hodgenville, Kentucky, to the Lincoln Farm in Larue County, Kentucky, shall be changed to the Lincoln Way, and said road from Louisville to the Lincoln Farm shall hereafter be designated and known as the 'Lincoln Way.'"

Within a year the legislature of Illinois adopted the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, the people of the state of Illinois ever mindful of their deep and lasting obligation to Abraham Lincoln and with abiding love and reverence do strive continually to honor his name and memory; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the people of Illinois that a fitting and permanent memorial to the memory of the great Emancipator would be the consecration and dedication of the road that he traveled from the place of his birth in Kentucky through Indiana and thence to his tomb at Springfield to be known forever as the Lincoln Way; and

WHEREAS, at its last session the legislature of Kentucky enacted a law naming the route over which Abraham Lincoln traveled from his home at Hodgenville to Indiana the 'Lincoln Way' and in the hope that the state of Indiana will join the states of Kentucky and Illinois in establishing and completing this fitting memorial, therefore be it

RESOLVED: By the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein, that the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library be and they are hereby requested to make the necessary investigations to determine the exact route traveled by Abraham Lincoln in his removal from Kentucky to Illinois, and to report to the General Assembly at as early a date as possible, and make such recommendations as they deem advisable to carry out the purpose of this resolution."

In due course of time the legislature of Indiana, alive to public interest and mindful of its duty in the matter, enacted the following law, which became effective February 15, 1915:

"WHEREAS, the state of Illinois has been endeavoring through a commission authorized by its legislature to determine and mark the route from the Wabash river westward through Illinois traveled by Abraham Lincoln and his father's family when they emigrated from Indiana in 1830, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED; By the General Assembly of the State of Indiana: that the Governor shall within 30 days after this act takes effect appoint a commission consisting of two persons, who shall serve without compensation, but shall be allowed traveling, hotel, and other necessary expenses in connection with their investigation, which sums are to be paid on warrants approved by both members of the commission.

It shall be the duty of said commission to make a careful inquiry, with a view to determining the route through Indiana traveled by Abraham Lincoln and his father's family when they removed from their home near the town of Gentryville, in Spencer County, Indiana, to Macon County, Illinois, in 1830. The commission shall have power to administer oaths and compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books and newspapers necessary to its investigation. After the conclusion of its inquiry it shall report the results of its labors to the Governor before the next regular meeting of the General Assembly.

The sum of five hundred dollars is hereby appropriated for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act."

In compliance with the foregoing law the Governor appointed Joseph M. Cravens, of Madison, and Jesse W. Weik, of Green-

castle, members of the commission. On April 21, 1915, the commission met in Indianapolis and organized by electing Mr. Cravens as president and Mr. Weik as secretary.

Before entering upon the details of our investigation, it will not be inappropriate if we preface the same with a brief sketch of the Lincoln family, and a recital of the causes that led to their several migrations.

A century ago Thomas Lincoln, a native of Virginia, was living in Hardin County, Kentucky. By trade a carpenter, he was nevertheless struggling to make a living by farming. The country about him was more or less barren, the timber small and of little value, and the soil so thin and poor he found it a never ending task to make both ends meet. The returns were meagre and the prospect anything but encouraging. Meanwhile, stories of great stretches of rich and unoccupied lands began to reach his ears, and finally despairing of any betterment in his condition so long as he remained in Kentucky, he resolved to leave the State and seek a more inviting home beyond the Ohio.

In the fall of 1816, therefore, he began preparations for his removal. Building a flat-boat he loaded onto it his tools and personal effects, including in the invoice "four hundred gallons of whisky." He launched his craft on a tributary of Salt River known as the Rolling Fork, and slowly floated with the current till he reached the Ohio. At some point on the journey, which has thus far never been definitely fixed, his boat careened or capsized and his cargo slid into the water. By dint of great patience and labor, however, he succeeded in righting the vessel and recovering his tools and the greater part of the whiskey. Resuming his journey he drifted down the Ohio as far as the mouth of Anderson's Creek, on the Indiana side, near the present town of Troy, where he tied up and went ashore.

Here he disposed of his boat and placing his goods in the care of a settler named Francis Posey he struck out for the interior in quest of a suitable location for his new home. About sixteen miles northwest he found a tract of land that suited his fancy which he promptly marked out for himself. Then he made his way to Vincennes, where the United States Land Office was located, to make the required entry, and on his return to the land identified it by blazing the trees and piling up brush at the corners to establish the proper boundary lines.

These preliminaries disposed of he returned to Kentucky for his family, making the journey on foot. The family was small,

consisting of his wife, Nancy Hanks, a daughter, Sarah, and a son, Abraham. They were so poor that the backs of two horses were amply sufficient to transport themselves and their meagre array of worldly goods over the Kentucky hills to Indiana. In due time they reached and crossed the Ohio at the same point, opposite the mouth of Anderson Creek, where the head of the family had landed in the preceding fall. Here they lingered with Posey, who loaned them a wagon, into which they packed their belongings, including the whiskey, which, presumably, had lain undisturbed in the latter's cellar. Then slowly picking and blazing their way through the dense forest they at last reached their destination, a wooded rise near one of the upper reaches of Little Pidgeon Creek, known as the Buckhorn Ranch, and distant about a mile and a half from what was later to be known as the village of Gentryville. The question of location having thus been disposed of, Thomas Lincoln set resolutely to work to provide a shelter for his little family.

Passing over the intervening period during which the wife and mother, Nancy Hanks, had died of that much dreaded malady, milk-sickness, the daughter Sarah, wedded to Aaron Grigsby, had passed away in the throes of childbirth, and Thomas Lincoln had married a second wife in the person of Sarah Bush Johnston, we come now to the winter of 1829. Another epidemic of the "milk-sickness" had visited the Gentryville neighborhood. Not only the people but cattle and sheep in great numbers were being carried away by it. A veritable stampede followed. No one appreciated what inroads it could make in a community better than Thomas Lincoln, whose wife and two of her kindred, ten years before, had perished of the disease within one week. Again was he grieved and discouraged; again he listened to the rosy stories told by passing travelers of a new country full of wonderful attractions and great possibilities. It was the state of Illinois. Vast stretches of rich and fertile lands there were to be had on the easiest of terms. In fact, it was a veritable paradise for the poor man. Why not go there and start anew?

"The proposition," says one of Mr. Lincoln's biographers, "met with the general consent of the Lincoln contingent, and especially suited the roving and migratory spirit of Thomas Lincoln. He had been induced by the same rosy and alluring reports to leave Kentucky for Indiana. Four times had he moved since his first marriage, and in point of worldly goods he was no better off than when he first started in life. His land groaned



under the weight of a long neglected incumbrance, and like many of his neighbors he was ready for another change."

Having disposed of his eighty acres of land to Charles Grigsby for a hundred and twenty-five dollars and his corn and hogs to his friend David Turnham (the corn "bringing ten cents a bushel" and the hogs being "lumped") he loaded his household goods into a wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen, and with his family set out early in March, 1830, for the prairies of central Illinois. The emigrant party comprised thirteen persons, and included Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, their two sons, Abraham Lincoln and John D. Johnston, Squire Hall, his wife, Matilda Johnston, and son John; Dennis Hanks, his wife Elizabeth Johnston, and four children, Sarah J., Nancy M., Harriet A. and John Talbott. Hall and Hanks had married the two daughters of Mrs. Lincoln.

"The journey was long and tedious" narrates one of Lincoln's biographers, "the streams swollen and the roads muddy almost to the point of impassibility. The rude, heavy wagon with its primitive wooden wheels creaked and groaned as it crawled through the woods and now and then stalled in the mud. Many were the delays, but none ever disturbed the equanimity of its passengers. They were cheerful in the face of adversity, hopeful and determined; but none of them more so than the tall, ungainly youth in buck-skin breeches and coon-skin cap who wielded the gad and urged his patient oxen forward. As they entered the new State little did the curious people in the various towns through which they passed dream that the obscure and penniless driver who yelled his commands to the oxen would yet become the Chief Magistrate of the greatest nation of modern times."

So much for history. And now let us tell the story of our investigation and recount the reasons that have led us to determine what particular route these obscure and forlorn emigrants must have followed when they made their way in March, 1830., through our State from the Ohio to the Wabash; more specifically that part of the journey which stretches between the Lincolon Farm near Gentryville, In Spencer County, and the city of Vincennes, where they crossed the Wabash into Illinois.

One of the most significant and convincing items in the array of facts we have succeeded in gathering comes from Abraham Lincoln himself. It appears that one morning early in February, 1861, a few days before his departure for Washington to begin the duties of the great office to which he had been elected, he left his home in Springfield to pay a farewell visit to his aged step-mother, who

was then living in Coles County, Illinois. He reached the town of Charleston in the evening. The next morning he started in a buggy for Farmington, a village about eight miles southwest, where the old lady was then living with a daughter. His only companion was Augustus H. Chapman, whose wife was the daughter of Dennis Hanks, and therefore the grand-daughter of Mr. Lincoln's step-mother. Mr. Chapman, who died recently, lived for many years in Charleston, a trustworthy, intelligent and truthful man—in fact, no one stood higher in the esteem and good will of his fellow citizens. He had been an officer in the Union Army, having served throughout the Civil War as Lieutenant Colonel of the 54th Illinois Inf. Vols. and left a military record alike praiseworthy and brilliant. Several years ago he furnished to an interviewer the following account of what took place and what was said by Mr. Lincoln when they rode together in the buggy to Farmington: "I married the daughter of Dennis Hanks, and the latter has been living with us for many years, have often talked to him about the removal from Indiana to Illinois in 1830 also with Sarah Bush Lincoln, his mother-in-law, who also lived in my family for some time prior to her death in 1869. One evening in February, 1861, Mr. Lincoln arrived in Charleston to visit his father's grave and also his step-mother, who happened to be at the home of a daughter near the village of Farmington in the country. He spent the night at the residence of Thomas A. Marshall, who was a State Senator residing in Charleston. The next morning early he walked over to the home of his cousin Dennis Hanks, after which he and I got into a buggy and started to drive to Farmington. Our conversation during the ride was devoted largely to family history. Among other things we got to talking about the journey from Indiana: he agreed substantially with Dennis Hanks as to the route they took; said they went from Gentryville to Jasper, thence to Washington and on to Vincennes, where they crossed the Wabash; thence to Lawrenceville, Illinois, where they turned north and pushed on to Palestine, in Crawford county. At Palestine they found a great many people drawn there by the land office. They kept on paralleling the river to Darwin, where they left the Wabash behind them.

At this point they set off in a northwesterly direction, passing through Richwoods in Clark County; thence to a point about six miles west of Charleston called Dead Man's Grove; thence north through Nelsonville, Moultrie County, to Decatur, where they stopped."

The facts thus narrated by Col. Chapman were communicated by him to the secretary of this commission Jan. 3, 1896, and the above version of the interview is copied from the original notes made at the time. Included with the latter MS. is the following memorandum of a statement by Harriet A. Hanks, the wife of Col. Chapman, who was one of the emigrants from Indiana in 1830:

Name, Harriet Chapman, daughter of Dennis Hanks and grand-daughter of Sarah Bush Lincoln; says she was born in Indiana and when about four years old accompanied her parents and the Lincolns when they removed to Illinois about 1830; her grandmother told her the first printing press and the first Indians she ever saw were at Vincennes; that on the way she (the grandmother) and her daughters rode horseback part of the way, the children being in the wagon; that the saddles on which they rode were bought with money that was due the old lady from her first husband's estate, and which she rode to Kentucky to collect.

It will be remembered that in the summer of 1865, Mr. W. H. Herndon, who had been Mr. Lincoln's law partner in Springfield, visited southeastern Illinois, southern Indiana, and central Kentucky in quest of material for a life of Lincoln which he expected to write, but which was not published till the spring of 1889. When in Charleston, Illinois, he interviewed the Chapmans, Dennis Hanks, Sarah Bush Lincoln and others, accumulating a rich store of material all of which has been placed at the disposal of the commission. This data which was collected over half a century ago when the facts were fresh in the minds of those who communicated them is of the greatest historic value. But strange to relate although Mr. Herndon's researches were profound and exhaustive he seems not to have learned or, at least, put on record the particular route chosen by the Lincoln's when they emigrated from Indiana. Col. Chapman's contribution to Mr. Herndon's undertaking was very voluminous and of great weight, owing to his intimate relations with Dennis Hanks, Sarah Bush Lincoln, and even Abraham Lincoln himself. With a few trifling exceptions his testimony is almost entirely in his own handwriting. Here is a brief extract from an account by him of the journey to Illinois copied from the original MS. and written in September, 1865:

"Thomas Lincoln moved from Indiana to Macon County, Illinois, in March, 1830, in a large four-horse wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen, the only wagon he ever owned. He brought

with him some stock cattle, a horse or two, three beds and bedding, one bureau, one table, one clothes chest, one set of chairs, cooking utensils, etc., three families came together, Lincoln's, Hall's and Hanks'. Squire Hall and Dennis Hanks had married sisters, the two step-daughters of Thomas Lincoln. Abe Lincoln drove his father's ox team. The waters were very high at the time and they came near losing their team, wagon, and contents in crossing the Okaw or Kaskaskia River."

A word here as to Dennis Hanks. He was born in 1799 and died in October, 1892, and with the exception of Abraham Lincoln was probably the only member of that band of hardy pioneers who migrated to Illinois in 1830 who could write; at least who could put on paper anything in the nature of a connected statement of facts. He is the best and in fact the only authority we have for our limited knowledge of Mr. Lincoln's early days. Mr. Herndon realizing the value as well as the importance of Hanks's testimony examined him with the skill and precision of a lawyer, the result being a contribution to the story of Mr. Lincoln's life without an equal in point of accuracy and historic interest.

Twenty years after Mr. Herndon had cross examined Hanks the latter came under the observation of Mr. Weik, the secretary of the commission, to whom Mr. Herndon had turned over his entire collection of letters and papers, including everything written by Hanks. Mr. Weik held frequent interviews with Hanks in Charleston and Paris, Illinois, in which places he alternately made his home with relatives. Following is a copy of an entry written by Mr. Weik in his dairy Thursday, October 28, 1886, in which Hanks refers to the migration of the Lincolns from Indiana in 1830:

"At noon reached Paris, where I met Mrs. Chapman and her father Dennis Hanks; latter told about life of Lincoln in Indiana and Illinois; said he came to Ind. from Ky, in year after Lincoln's arrival but accompanied them from Ind. to Ills; they went from Gentryville to Jasper, thence to Petersburg and Vincennes where crossed the Wabash. Hanks showed watch given him by Lincoln when he visited Washington during war; was of silver and had inscription from Lincoln as Prest. etc."

In addition to what has been detailed above the commission has been furnished the testimony of another witness, one to whom

Mr. Hanks also communicated his recollection of the route through Indiana. This gentleman is Mr. James H. McCall, a resident of Winterhaven, Florida, who writes as follows:

"Winterhaven, Fla., Dec. 30, 1914.

Mr. Jesse W. Weik,  
Greencastle, Ind.

Dear Sir:

During the 80's I was engaged in traveling through southern Indiana and Illinois and frequently visited the burial place of Nancy Hanks and other early pioneers of that locality. Subsequently, I think in 1886, I became acquainted with Dennis Hanks at Charleston, Ills. who gave me a description of their trip from Gentryville to Vincennes. I can only recall portions of the details but I do remember that he said they crossed White River at what is now Petersburg. Some of the party were on horseback and carried fodder for their animals bound on behind. Mr. Hanks became very much interested when I told him I had visited the grave of his sister(?). You will probably recall that through the generosity of a few Indiana citizens, admirers of Mr. Lincoln, an iron fence was erected. The old gentleman seemed very solicitous to know for sure that 'that stun' was placed at the right grave, and believed he could tell if he could go there. He showed me his watch presented to him by Pres. Lincoln of which he seemed very proud.

Thinking these few incidents may be of interest to you I take great pleasure in sending them.

Very respectfully,  
JAMES H. McCALL."

Later, in compliance with a suggestion to that effect Mr. McCall put his story into the form of sworn testimony as follows:

#### "TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Be it known that during the summer of 1886 or 1887 according to the best recollection of the undersigned I, James H. McCall, met in the city of Charleston, Ills. Mr. Dennis Hanks, and there held a conversation with him regarding the early life of the Lincoln family, their residence in southern Indiana and removal to Illinois, in what year he did not say or if he did I have forgotten it,

During our conversation he said they traveled north from Gentryville, Ind., to Petersburg, where they crossed the White River, thence to Vincennes, where they crossed the Wabash. Owing to the lapse of time many incidents related by Hanks are lost to my memory, but I am certain that no reference was made to any other route or crossing of rivers than those stated.

(Signed) JAMES H. McCALL.

Subscribed and sworn to before me a notary Public this the 15th day of May, 1915.

J. WALKER POPE,

(SEAL)

*Notary Public.*

It will be observed that Col. Chapman in his testimony intimates that Mr. Lincoln's recollection of the route of travel from Indiana to Illinois is in "substantial accord" with that of Dennis Hanks, but a comparison of the statements of the two shows that if Chapman's recollection of Mr. Lincoln's account, that the route led from Jasper through Washington is correct then there is a variance, for according to the testimony of the two witnesses, Weik and McCall, Dennis Hanks declared the route led from Jasper northwest through Ireland and Otwell to Petersburg.

Thus far it will be observed that we have confined ourselves to testimony emanating from those who were members of the emigrant party. There are however other sources of information. For instance there are good and cogent reasons in support of the contention that when the emigrants set out from their farm near Gentryville they went north through Dale and thence in the same general direction to Jasper, or what was then known as Enlows Mill on the Patoka River. An examination of the country made by the commission in October, 1915, between the Lincoln Farm and the town of Dale shows that within the exception of a tributary of Little Pigeon, which at best is an insignificant branch across the roadway, there are no streams of any consequence between the points named. The case would have been different had the Lincolns turned northwestward and endeavored to make Petersburg by way of Selvin. In that event it would have been necessary to cross the north fork of Little Pigeon and also Pokeberry Creek, both of which including their approaches through the bottoms, were streams of no inconsiderable size for an ox team and a heavily loaded wagon to cross in the month of March, especially before the days of graded roads. In addition

we know that the Lincolns were in the habit of passing to and fro between their home and Dale, or Elizabeth as it was formerly known. Mr. Herndon demonstrated that fact when he visited the Lincoln home and the Gentryville neighborhood in 1865. At that time David Turnham, to whom the Lincoln's sold their corn and hogs when they left for Illinois, was living but a short distance from Dale, and likewise William Woods and his daughter Elizabeth, at whose house the junior Lincoln was a frequent visitor. From Dale northward past Huntingburg the commission found high ground and no large streams save Patoka River, which stretches across the country, from a point as far east as Paoli and as far west as the Wabash, and which would have had to be crossed somewhere by the traveler if he expected to reach Vincennes.

In 1865 David Turnham told Mr. Herndon that a road from Rockport to Bloomington passed through Gentryville in 1823, but the records of the State indicate an earlier existence than that. December 31st, 1821, the General Assembly enacted a law, one of whose sections reads as follows:

"Sec. 7. That the road from Rockport to Portersville, thence to Hindostan, thence to Bloomington be and the same is established in length eighty miles; that the sum of five thousand four hundred and seventeen dollars be appropriated and that Joseph D. Clements of Martin County, Michael Buskirk of Monroe and Sam Snyder of Spencer be appointed commissioners, etc."

That the road from Rockport through Gentryville and Jasper was an early and generally used thorofare is also attested by the routes over which the mails were carried during that period. The following from the records of the Post Office Department at Washington is not without significance:

"June 30, 1825, Mail Route 167

From Rockport by Porterville to Washington.

Once in two weeks, 55 miles. Leave Rockport every other Wednesday, 1 P. M., and Washington Thurs. 6 P. M."

"Oct. 10, 1827, Mail Route 486

From Rockport by Gentry's Store and

Portersville to Washington once a week.

Leave Rockport every Sat. 6 A. M.; leave Wash. every Thurs. 6. A. M.

“July 25, 1829, Mail Route 18  
 From Rockport by Gentry's Store and  
 Portersville to Washington once a week.  
 Leaves Rockport every Tuesday noon;  
 leave Washington Thurs. 6 A. M.

In 1834 a mail from Petersburg once a week went  
 eastward to Jasper and Paoli, length of route 54 miles,  
 carrier Ezra Chapman.

In 1834 another mail once a week left Rockport  
 passing by Gentry's Store, Jasper and  
 Petersburg; length of route 64- $\frac{1}{2}$  miles,  
 carrier Ezra Chapman.

Having reached and crossed the Patoka at or near the ford  
 at Enlow's Mill—now Jasper—to which point that river had been  
 declared navigable by the legislature of Indiana in 1829, the Lin-  
 coln emigrants were now in that section of the country traversed  
 by the widely known Buffalo Trace. This road or trace which  
 followed the path made by the myriads of buffalo, who for ages,  
 at certain seasons of the year had made their way from the  
 prairies of the northwest to the salt licks of Kentucky, became,  
 in time, the main line of travel between the two United States  
 Land Offices in Indiana, Jeffersonville and Vincennes. Over  
 it passed the thousands of pioneers who settled in and developed  
 the southern half of the Hoosier State. It led from Louisville  
 to Vincennes, was surveyed for a pike in 1834 and \$654,411 spent  
 on it. From Paoli westward to Vincennes there were two trails,  
 one via Washington and the other by way of Portersville, Otwell  
 and Petersburg. After 1820 both were used as stage lines.  
 From Jasper a road ran northwest intercepting the Buffalo Trace  
 at or near Otwell, from which point the former led to Petersburg  
 and thence to Vincennes. This was the route over which the mail  
 was carried from Vincennes to Paoli in 1834 as indicated by the  
 records of the Post Office Department at Washington, D. C.

After leaving the Patoka behind them the question naturally  
 arises whether the Lincolns continued north to Portersville, crossed  
 the East Fork of White River and made their way thence to Wash-  
 ington, where it was necessary to cross White River again in order  
 to reach Vincennes. While apparently in accord with Col.  
 Chapman's account of Mr. Lincoln's recollection of the events



of 1830 might the latter not have used the word Petersburg and Chapman afterwards erroneously recorded it as Washington, and might not the President-elect have said Washington when he really meant Petersburg. The commission drove over the routes between Jasper and Washington and between Jasper and Petersburg, and if topography alone be the consideration we cannot refrain from believing that the average traveler as between the two would have chosen the Petersburg route. We are therefore of the opinion that after reaching the north bank of the Patoka the emigrants set out in a northwestwardly direction passing through or near Ireland, Otwell (where their road joined the Buffalo Trace), Algiers and Petersburg. Here, or near here, they crossed White River and made their way to Vincennes.

After leaving Jasper several other routes existed over which they might have reached their destination. They could have continued their way northward to Portersville and then turned west following the Buffalo Trace, keeping on the south side of White River to Petersburg; or they might have stopped on this latter road at a point a few miles east of Petersburg called High Banks and crossed the East Fork of White River where it is fordable at times; or they might have turned to the right at Petersburg and followed the road which lead northward to Washington. In all but one of these cases, however, it would have been necessary to cross White River twice.

The great and convincing argument in support of the Petersburg route is that it necessitated crossing White River but once. This fact was undoubtedly known to Thomas Lincoln because he had already made one round trip between Gentryville and Vincennes and possibly another. Ferrying the rivers in those days involved more or less expense, so that people as poor as the Lincolns would naturally be inclined to avoid the outlay whenever possible.

Another reason why the Lincolns chose the Jasper—Petersburg route is because the land is high—in fact, a long ridge, a veritable water-shed stretches between the points named. Notice any good map of the State and you will find that there is no stream worthy of representation on a map to cross. White River on the north side of the ridge flows west; Flat Creek on the south side east, thus indicating a perfect water-shed. According to State Geologist Cox the plateau west of Ireland in Dubois County is 120 feet above White River and, according to maps of surveys made by Charles D. Walcott, director of the United States Geolog-

ical Survey, the ground from Jasper to Petersburg gradually rises. Ireland is 479 feet above sea level, Otwell 496; a short distance away where the Buffalo Trace intercepts it is 502, and at Algiers it is 527.

We have given much time and study to such maps of Indiana published about the period of the Lincoln migration as we have been able to obtain. They were made mainly in the eastern states and for the use of travelers to the west. In some cases they are slightly inaccurate, but taken as a whole they are reasonably correct and faithful to the facts. At all events they are the only record evidence we have of the roads and streams of that period. The records of the commissioners courts in Spencer and Dubois Counties—from which source it would have been possible to obtain evidence of the existence and direction of the public roads—have been destroyed by fire, so that in the absence of competent parole testimony we must fall back on the maps.

The earliest published map of Indiana we have been able to secure is one by Anthony Finley made in 1820. It shows a road following the Ohio River from the mouth of Big Pigeon past Rockport and Troy to Fredonia and Corydon. Another road is the Buffalo Trace leading from Vincennes through Washington to Paoli and from Vincennes through Petersburg and Portersville to Paoli, and still another is a road from New Harmony through Princeton, Petersburg, and Washington to Bloomfield.

A map published by S. Augustus Mitchell in 1831 shows that a road beginning at Rockport extended northward passing through Jasper, Portersville and thence to Mt. Pleasant, a town near the east line of Daviess County. At Jasper this road was intersected by three other roads, one from Petersburg to Paoli, another from Fredonia and another from Boonville.

Another map by Mitchell in 1834 shows a road from Rockport through Jasper and Portersville to Mt. Pleasant, a road from Boonville to Jasper, joining the Rockport road at a point south of Jasper and not far from Huntington and another road from Princeton ending at Jasper.

A map by S. Morrison published in Cincinnati and certified by the Surveyor General of the United States M. T. Williams, March 3, 1835, shows a road from Rockport to Jasper. It does not touch Portersville but goes beyond Jasper on the south and east sides of the East Fork of White River to a place in Martin County called the Rapids, where it intersects the upper branch of the Vincennes and New Albany turnpike.

A map by J. H. Colton, 1836, shows the road from Rockport by way of Gentryville and Dale to Jasper. Here it divides, one fork going to Washington by way of Portersville, the other northwest by way of a place named Delectable (now Algiers) to Petersburg. At the latter place it is crossed by a road from Princeton to Washington.

Another map by Mitchell issued in 1837 shows the road from Rockport to Jasper, Portersville and Mt. Pleasant. Another road starting at Jasper joins the Vincennes and New Albany road at Paoli. The road from Petersburg reaches Jasper by way of Portersville.

A map issued by Colton in 1838 indicates three roads from the Ohio, one starting at Troy, another at Rockport and still another at Newburgh. They join at a point in Dubois County, near the present town of Huntingburg, from which place one road goes north to Jasper, thence to Portersville and Mt. Pleasant, and another to Washington. At Jasper a road which starts at Corydon passes through the villages of Ireland and Otwell, crosses the White River at or near Petersburg and goes thence northwest to Vincennes.

Although the maps do not so indicate, the records of the land department in the office of the Auditor of State show that license for what was probably the first ferry on White River was issued to Nathan Harlan in 1805, thus tending to prove that travel to Vincennes by way of Petersburg must have begun at a very early date.

In view, therefore, of the facts set forth in the foregoing summary of our investigations and after a careful inspection of the country lying between Troy on the Ohio, where the Lincolns first set foot on the soil of Indiana, and Vincennes on the Wabash, where they emerged from the State, we are of the opinion that after these hardy and venturesome emigrants bade farewell to their cabin home near Gentryville in March, 1830, they moved northward through Dale to Jasper, thence northwestwardly through the villages of Ireland, Otwell, and Algiers to Petersburg, at or near which place they crossed White River and then pushed on to Vincennes, by the most direct route.

Without dwelling unduly on the delicacy and magnitude of our task, we take this means of expressing our thanks to those who have so handsomely and magnanimously aided us in our undertaking. We are especially grateful to Judge R. E. Roberts and the officials of Spencer County; to Messrs. Williams and Barker

of Warriek County; to Messrs. A. L. Gray, George R. Wilson and Judge J. L. Bretz of Dubois County; to Messrs. J. W. Wilson, R. M. Gray and John C. Chaille of Pike County; to Messrs. Chas. Siefert and Mayor McCartney of Washington, Daviess County; to the Hon. James Wade Emison, the Hon. James M. House, and the County Officers of Knox County; to Capt. J. W. Wartman of Evansville; to the officers of the State of Indiana at Indianapolis including, especially, His Excellency the Governor, the Auditor and the Librarian, Prof. Brown, and in a word to the seemingly endless number of kind friends everywhere. The list is too long for insertion here. Assisted and sustained by their generous and unstinted co-operation we have been able to reach a truthful, just and we trust satisfactory conclusion—without it we could not hope for success.

Very respectfully,

JOSEPH M. CRAVENS, *Chairman.*

JESSE W. WEIK, *Secretary.*







